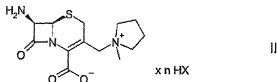


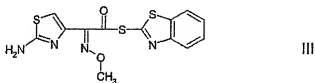


The process comprises the reaction of a pyrrolidinium-1-[(7-amino-2-carboxy-8-oxo-5-thia-1-azabicyclo[4.2.0]-oct-2-en-yl)methyl]-halide, an acid addition salt thereof or its free base of formula II



5

wherein n is 0-2 and X is chloride, bromide or iodide with (Z)-(2-aminothiazol-4-yl)methoxyimino-acetic acid-2-mercaptobenzothiazoly-lester of formula III



10 in an acetonic or aqueous/acetonic solution, optionally in the presence of a base, wherein cefepime dihydrochloride monohydrate is isolated directly from the reaction mixture by adding HCl.

15 The process is extremely simple.

Neither extraction steps nor more complex purification operations are necessary.

20 The solvent regeneration is an especially simple procedure, in that only one solvent is used both for the acylation reaction and for the crystallisation step.

The intermediate compound of formula II may be present as mono-addition salt or di-addition salt. In addition, the intermediate of formula II may be present in the  
5 form of a solvate, for example a hydrate. The usual addition-salts are represented by the mono- and dihydrochloride or the hydriodide.

Depending on the salt form, the corresponding acid  
10 addition salt is released for the reaction with the acylation agent with the assistance of the necessary amount of a base, preferably a trialkylamine. Accordingly, a mono-addition salt is released with approximately one molar equivalent of base, and a di-  
15 addition salt is correspondingly released with approximately two. However, it is also possible to react the corresponding acid addition salt with (Z)-(2-aminothiazol-4-yl)methoxyimino-acetic acid-2-mercapto-benzothiazolylester without adding a base.

20 If the intermediate of formula II is used as the mono- or dihydrochloride, the active ingredient cefepime is naturally obtained as the pure dihydrochloride. If the intermediate is used as the hydriodide, the  
25 recrystallised product is practically free from traces of iodide.

Alternatively, foreign ions can be removed from the reaction solutions by methods known per se, for example  
30 with the assistance of an anion exchanger.

Suitable trialkylamines are C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>-trialkylamines, for example triethylamine or tributylamine. The presence of water in the acylation reaction in principle also  
35 allows the use of inorganic bases, for example sodium or potassium hydroxide or an alkali hydrogen carbonate or alkali carbonate.

The reaction is preferably carried out in the presence of water: the amount of water is not critical; there must be balanced solubility of the cephalosporin intermediate of formula II on the one hand and of the active ester of formula III on the other hand. The water/acetone ratio is about 1:10 to 10:1, and preferably a water/acetone ratio of 1:1 to 1:5 is used for the acylation reaction. After the acylation reaction, in order to crystallise cefepime dihydrochloride, hydrochloric acid is added, preferably aqueous concentrated hydrochloric acid, and a pH value of less than 3, preferably less than 1, is set. By adding acetone, the crystallisation of cefepime dihydrochloride is then completed. Preferred water/acetone ratios in the crystallisation step are ratios of 1:1 to 1:20, especially ratios of 1:3 to 1:10.

The examples below elucidate the invention in more detail.

#### Example 1

Preparation of 1-[[ (6R,7R)-7-[[ (2Z)-(2-amino-4-thiazolyl)methoxyimino)acetyl]amino]-2-carboxy-8-oxo-5-thia-1-azabicyclo[4.2.0]oct-2-en-3-yl]methyl]-1-pyrrolidinium dihydrochloride hydrate

44.3 g of pyrrolidinium-1-[(7-amino-2-carboxy-8-oxo-5-thia-1-azabicyclo[4.2.0]oct-2-en-yl)methyl]-iodide monohydrate (NMP-ACA) are suspended in a mixture of 200 ml of H<sub>2</sub>O and 400 ml of acetone. 38.5 g of (Z)-(2-aminothiazol-4-yl)methoxy-iminoacetic acid-2-mercapto-benzothiazoly-lester are added to the suspension. At a temperature of ca. 15°C, a mixture of 13.9 ml of triethylamine and 14 ml of acetone is slowly added dropwise to the suspension over the course of 3 hours.

The resulting cloudy solution is stirred for a total of 6.5 hours at 20°C.

33 ml of 37% HCl are subsequently added to the reaction mixture, and then ca. 300 ml of acetone are added  
5 whilst stirring. The mixture is seeded with seed crystals, and within ca. 90 minutes a suspension is produced. Subsequently, within 90 minutes, 1700 ml of acetone are added dropwise whilst stirring gently. The suspension is stirred for a further one hour at room  
10 temperature, and then the title compound is isolated through a suction filter, and the product is washed with 250 ml of acetone/H<sub>2</sub>O mixture (90/10) and with a total of 500 ml of acetone in two portions. The product is subsequently dried for ca. 18 hours at room  
15 temperature in a vacuum drying chamber.

Yield 51.8 g  
purity: HPLC: 98.8 area percent

## 20 Example 2

Recrystallisation of 1-[[ (6R,7R)-7-[[ (2Z)-(2-amino-4-thiazolyl)methoxyimino)acetyl]amino]-2-carboxy-8-oxo-5-thia-1-azabicyclo[4.2.0]oct-2-en-3-yl]methyl]-1-methylpyrrolidinium dihydrochloride hydrate

25 50.0 g of cefepime dihydrochloride hydrate are dissolved in 200 ml of H<sub>2</sub>O. 22 ml of 6 n HCl are added and then the solution is mixed with 5 g of activated carbon. The suspension is stirred for 10 minutes at  
30 room temperature and then filtered through a suction filter. The filter layer is then washed with 50 ml of H<sub>2</sub>O, and the combined filtrates are mixed with 600 ml of acetone until turbidity occurs. The resulting suspension is stirred for 15 minutes and then a further  
35 1400 ml of acetone are added over the course of one hour whilst stirring gently. The suspension is stirred for another one hour at room temperature, and the

product is subsequently isolated through a suction filter. The product is washed with a total of 500 ml of acetone and dried for ca. 18 hours at room temperature in a vacuum drying chamber.

5

Yield	45.01 g
purity HPLC:	99.7 area percent